



MEMO

TO Mr. Manfred Gale (HQDA, DAMA-ZD)

FROM H. E. Puthoff

SUBJECT SRI/Gale Committee Meeting of 24-25 July

DATE 3 August 1979

LOCATION Bld. 44

CC

We appreciated having an opportunity to discuss with you and members of your committee several aspects of our work during your recent visit to SRI. We welcome this kind of dialog and exchange of views with individuals of diverse backgrounds, who are willing to focus on issues of importance to us and our program.

There were certain aspects of the meeting, however, which we felt were unsatisfactory, but for which we have specific remedial actions to propose.

As you know from our agenda, we had intended to cover four major areas of interest: (1) an historical overview, including past applications to problems of interest to clients; (2) scientific questions with regard to RV protocols, judging, statistics, and so forth; (3) the goals and planned activities on present client programs; and (4) committee discussion with program remote viewers. Unfortunately, with the extended ad hoc discussions that took place during the opening presentation on historical material (Part 1) and the need to press on to a discussion of planned efforts on present client programs (Part 3), we all but skipped Part 2 on scientific questions (for example, none of the slides were shown). This seemed expedient at the time, given the apparent inappropriateness, in a group of such diverse interests, of getting involved in detailed discussions on specific technical issues (e.g., nuances as to protocol procedures, statistical evaluation techniques, etc.). This may have been "penny-wise and pound foolish," however, for all of us at SRI realized at one time or another in casual discussions with individual committee members during dinner breaks, etc., that there was a profound lack of understanding of some very basic issues. To cite some specific examples:

- (1) It was expressed that the RV target pool should be chosen and maintained by someone further removed from the experimentation than the principal investigators, and that access to the target pool should be limited.

The above is in fact the procedure already in force. An independent target selection team generated the target pool and turned them over to the Project SSO who keeps them stored in a secure container. Targets are then withdrawn only under supervision of the SSO (who records their withdrawal) at the beginning of RV sessions. In

*What are they talking about. I know this not to be the case for some of their targets. BS.*

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particular, the RV session interviewers (Targ and Puthoff) had never seen the target list until your committee asked that it be brought to the conference room.

- (2) Concern was expressed that apparently successful RV results in our protocols might be due instead to a combination of remote viewer guesses of known Bay Area landmarks and/or artifactual sharpening of a subject's narrative by cues from the interviewer who is at least educated, if not directly knowledgeable as to the target possibilities. (We think that it was understood that the interviewer never knows the particular target.) The corollary to this concern is that although the RV function may exist, our protocols can't demonstrate it because of the above-stated circumstances.

In fact, the statistical procedure we use takes into account at the outset the possibility that the target pool might be completely known to both remote viewer and interviewer--that it could be that the remote viewer and interviewer were poring over the target list during the session; in short, that the RV series is to be treated as belonging to that class of studies in which the elements of the target pool are known a priori to both remote viewer and interviewer, as in studies involving numbers or cards as targets. (In fact, we would go this apparent criticism one step further and assert that it would be naive to assume that by any change in protocol one could in principle avoid the assumption that the remote viewer knows the target pool.) Thus, when there is a statistically significant result in our protocols, the cause must lie elsewhere than remote viewer guess or interviewer cueing, as these possibilities are handled at a fundamental level by a statistical procedure that assumes the worst. This fact must be understood by the committee members if they are to assess the SRI program results properly.

- (3) It was repeatedly suggested that it would be better to dispense with the interviewer in an RV session so as to have a "cleaner" protocol, and that the use of an interviewer is somehow a methodological flaw.

Such a suggestion indicates a complete failure to comprehend that success as obtained by use of the SRI RV protocols (as opposed to other procedures) is in large part due to an innovative design which incorporates a division of labor between remote viewer and interviewer designed to mirror the two primary modes of cerebral functioning; namely, the nonanalytic cognitive style (brain function) that predominates in spatial pattern recognition and other holistic processing (and is hypothesized to predominate in psi functioning), and the

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analytical cognitive style that predominates in verbal and other analytical functioning. (Only very experienced remote viewers appear to have the ability to handle both cognitive styles simultaneously.) The removal of the burden of analytical functioning (by the interviewer) during exercise of the RV faculty appears to be an important ingredient for success. A change in this aspect of the methodology may give the appearance of a cleaner protocol (it is not), but it may also yield the lower level results characteristic of classical academic (as opposed to operational) studies. Our client programs, on the other hand, force us to develop techniques that yield results, and it cannot be stressed enough that we have developed the appropriate statistical procedures to handle such possibilities as remote viewer guessing and interviewer cueing or sharpening.

To the degree that the committee's overall evaluation of the SRI program will touch on technical issues such as these, we would suggest that it is incumbent on the committee members to obtain a more thorough grounding in the technical details than was possible in the few hours available during the July meeting at SRI. We would doubt, for example, that anyone would be in a position to critique our present RV statistical procedures fairly and justly (not that there wasn't the potential because of the expertise represented) simply because we did not have an opportunity to present them, and, being a new approach in our program (Scott's direct-count-of-permutations method), we have not discussed them at any length in publications available to the committee. Since the approach (a) is specifically designed to handle narrative material of the remote viewing type, (b) takes into account the possibility of potential remote viewer/interviewer guessing and/or knowledge of the target pool, and (c) has been thoroughly investigated, used, and documented in the academic parapsychology community as the most conservative reference statistic to fall back on, one cannot assess remarks such as (1) - (3) above without at least an intuitive understanding of the assumptions and implications of this approach. Beyond this, there were other items that to our mind need clearing up, such as confusion of our work with other labs' work and statements, and little awareness that we have done considerable experimentation with simpler paranormal functions than remote viewing (e.g., computer-automated number-perception tasks, binary card tasks) to establish certain parameters of the more complicated functioning. (Such scientific legwork we did not present to the committee, as it seemed beyond the scope of interest expressed at the time.)

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To remedy the shortcomings inherent in the brief orientation meeting of 24-25 July, to ensure that we do justice to the multitudinous concerns of the committee, and to ensure that the SRI program obtains a fair hearing from the committee, we propose that: (1) all committee members receive from your office a copy of this memo and the attached protocols to gain a better understanding of our procedures; (2) further discussions be held in smaller groups between SRI personnel and those members of the committee who are especially concerned with specific issues (e.g., protocol procedures and statistical approaches with Drs. Synder and Tang).

We are available for such interactions at Menlo Park, Washington, or elsewhere, and would appreciate the opportunity to resolve these issues at the earliest convenience. Out of such interactions we could also expect as a bonus to define with greater clarity those scientific issues that need to be pursued in more detail should fundamentally-oriented research programs be set up in the future, as they must.

Since we are mutually tasked by our sponsor to provide the best technical assessment possible of a field fraught with complex and subtle issues, we believe that additional actions such as we have proposed are necessary if we are to fulfill our mutual goals and responsibilities.

Enclosed are copies of the memo and protocols for all the committee members, which we would appreciate your distributing. Also enclosed for use at your discretion are additional copies for Maj. Gen. E. R. Thompson, Dr. Ruth Davis, and the Hon. Walter Laberge.

We remain at your disposal as to arrangements should you decide to follow up on the further interactions we have proposed.